

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TAIPEI 00205 121003Z
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 /017 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
TO USDOC WASHDC
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UNCLAS TAIPEI 0205

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, TW
SUBJECT: PURCHASE OF A FLEET OF BUSES BY TAIWAN HIGHWAY
BUREAU

REF : TAIPEI'S 142; CCP FY77

1. DEPUTY DIRECTOR Y. S. HSIUNG OF THE TAIWAN HIGHWAY BUREAU (THB) CALLED ON COMMATT DEC. 10 REGARDING THE BUREAU'S PLANS TO PURCHASE A FLEET OF 50 CROSS-COUNTRY BUSES WHICH IS TO PROVIDE ISLAND-LONG SERVICE ON THE NEW FREEWAY WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO BE COMPLETED LATE IN 1978. THE THB HAS REPORTEDLY EARMARKED US\$13 MILLION FOR THIS PURCHASE. U.S. EQUIPMENT IS PREFERRED, BOTH BECAUSE OF ITS KNOWN QUALITY AND THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF PURCHASING MORE U.S. GOODS WHERE FEASIBLE.

2. MR. HSIUNG SEEKS INFORMATION FROM U.S. MANUFACTURERS OF LONG-HAUL MOTOR COACHES REGARDING PRICES, SPECIFICATIONS, PURCHASER'S OPERONS, ETC. AS THE THB IS UNDER TIGHT BUDGET RESTRICTIONS, IT IS ALSO INTERESTED IF KNOWING WHETHER PRICES COULD BE REDUCED (A) IF MANUAL TRANSMISSIONS COULD BE SUBSTITUTED FOR AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSIONS; (B) IF THE HEATING SYSTEM WERE ELIMINATED; (C) IF PARTS AND FURNISHINGS SUCH AS DELUXE RECLINING SEATS, TIRES, SASH, WINDOW GLASS, AND CENTER PEDESTAL SEATS COULD BE SUPPLIED LOCALLY. THE THB IS ALSO VERY INTERESTED IN KNOWING
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WHETHER BUSES COULD BE SHIPPED IN A SEMI-KNOCK-DOWN CONDITION FOR ASSEMBLY IN TAIWAN, WHICH WOULD REDUCE CUSTOMS DUTIES WHICH THE THB MUST PAY. THE THB WOULD ALSO LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER THERE WOULD BE CHARGES FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES IF BUSES WERE PARTIALLY ASSEMBLED IN TAIWAN. WE WOULD APPRECIATE THIS INFORMATION BEING SENT TO THE EMBASSY FOR TRANSMISSION TO THE THB ASAP.

THE THB HAS ALREADY HAD PRELIMINARY CONTACT WITH MOTOR
COACH INC. (MCI) AND GENERAL MOTORS.

3. THE INITIAL ORDER OF 50 BUSES WILL PROBABLY LEAD TO
ADDITIONAL SALES OF 150 BUSES OF THIS TYPE IN FUTURE
YEARS. THE EMBASSY REALIZES THERE MAY BE PROBLEMS IN
SELLING OTHER THAN "OFF-THE-SHELF" MODELS, BUT BELIEVES
THERE IS AN EXCELLENT POSSIBILITY OF A U.S. FIRM DOING
SUBSTANTIAL AND CONTINUING BUSINESS WITH THE THB IF SOME
ACCOMMODATION OF ITS REQUIREMENTS CAN BE MET.
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